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McNamara Hits Back At Arends Criticism

Secretary of Defense McNamara lashed out today at critics who charged he acts like a dictator, accusing one such complainant of backing "irresponsible" action.

Saying it is his job to make the tough decisions on defense policy, Mr. McNamara told the Advertising Council, in a response to criticism yesterday by Representative Arends, Republican of Illinois.

"The man who made that attack yesterday is the ranting minority member of the committee that added \$1.1 billion to the defense budget. I don't think it is right when we have a man to support an irresponsible action in adding over \$1 billion to the budget that is not needed and then criticize the responsible official who took out the billion."

Mr. McNamara said it is "true in a sense" that he has acted as a dictator.

The budget submitted by the Chiefs of Staff and service secretaries totaled \$67 billion," he said. "I took \$14 billion out of that."

This comment drew loud applause from the audience of businessmen.

Mr. McNamara continued, "If I don't do it who's going to? I shouldn't turn over all the tough problems to the President. I turn over enough already."

In response to a question about Republican predictions they will cut the defense budget by \$1 billion, Mr. McNamara said that since Re-

publican Arends has joined in adding \$1.1 billion to the budget "now they've got to cut \$4 billion."

The House, meanwhile, continued its debate today on a \$15.8 billion weapons bill.

Passage of the measure is expected today. The House will later take up an actual appropriations bill for these major weapons and the rest of the Defense Department budget.

Only two changes were proposed yesterday in the record-breaking weapons authorization bill. The House Armed Services Committee unanimously recommended that Congress authorize another \$363.7 million for two more experimental RS-70s and \$134 million for two additional nuclear attack submarines. The McNamara program calls for three of the proposed 2,000-mile-an-hour planes and six of the submarines.

Mr. McNamara—or, "I-got-all-the-answers McNamara" as Mr. Arends called him in the House yesterday, was roundly criticized for assuming too much power in the Pentagon.

The Secretary of Defense "has practically made himself Chief of Staff," Mr. Arends said.

He said that a majority of the joint chiefs opposed Mr. McNamara on cancellation of the Skybolt missile and curtailment of the RS-70, and that the Navy had said that eight rather than six attack submarines are necessary in the new budget.